

Environment Committee H.B. 5272, 5483, 5504

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee

My name is Tom Peracchio. My brother, nephew, and I own and operate a dairy farm in Coventry. We have 440 cows and youngstock. We employ three full-time and two part-time employees.

Connecticut dairy farmers are in crisis. The price for our milk is down 40% from a year ago, while input costs are relatively unchanged. There are about 150 dairy farms in CT and without help from the state this number will diminish rapidly.

The federal government has always pursued a cheap food policy. This means that much of our food comes from California, Florida and foreign countries. Quality control issues, water shortages, weather and transportation problems could seriously jeopardize our food supply. Tremendous amounts of fuel are used to transport all this food.

We feel a local food supply is critical for the citizens of CT. We gross over 1 million dollars. This money not only supports six families, but numerous businesses in the state. Over 90% of our inputs are purchased in CT. We own 450 acres in 4 different locations in Coventry. We also rent land at 12 locations in 6 towns. All this cropland and woodland contributes to our state's beauty.

We are losing money every day. This can only be tolerated for a limited time. For economic reasons, food security and quality of life for all CT citizens, we feel CT dairy farmers are crucial.

We would like your support for these bills to help save and stabilize the dairy industry for the benefit of all CT citizens.

Thank you,

Tom Peracchio

Hytone Farm

Coventry

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